

A  
L E T T E R



TO THE  
RIGHT REVEREND  
THE

Bishop of *London*,

And the other

The Right Rev. the BISHOPS,

CONCERN'D. IN

The Publication of a Pamphlet, entitled, *Observations upon the Conduct and Behaviour of a certain Sect usually distinguished by the Name of METHODISTS.*

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By GEORGE WHITEFIELD, A. B. late of Pembroke-College, Oxford.

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*False Witnesses did rise up; they laid to my Charge Things that I knew not, Psal. xxxv. 11.*

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L O N D O N:

Printed for J. ROBINSON, at the *Golden-Lion* in *Ludgate-street*; and sold at the *Tabernacle*, and by Mr. JOHN SIMS in *Pitfield-street*, *Hoxton*. 1744.

[ Price Four Pence. ]

J. E. T. E. R.

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Bishop of London

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To the RIGHT REVEREND

The Bishop of LONDON, &c.

*My Lords,*

**T**HE Apostle *Peter* exhorts us, *to be ready to give an Answer to every one that asketh us a reason of the Hope that is in us, with Meekness and Fear.* And if this is to be our Conduct towards every one, much more are we bound to behave thus to those who are *Overseers of the Church of God*, and consequently are invested with an Authority to require an Answer at our Hands.

A Desire of complying with this Apostolical Injunction, induced me, my Lords, about five Weeks ago to publish an \* Advertisement,

\* Whereas some anonymous Papers against the People call'd *Methodists* in general, and myself and Friends in particular, have been for some Weeks printed in a large Edition, and handed about and read in the Religious Societies of

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ment, wherein I desired an open Publication of several anonymous Papers, entitled, *Observations upon the Conduct and Behaviour of a certain Sect, usually distinguished by the Name of Methodists*. — Papers which, upon Enquiry, I found had been printed some considerable Time, had been read in the Societies of *London* and *Westminster*, and handed about in a private Manner to particular Friends, with strict Orders to part with them to no one. — What could be the meaning of such a Procedure, I know not. — But this I know, however such a clandestine way of acting, may favour of the *Wisdom of the Serpent*, it does not bespeak that *Harmlessness of the Dove*, which our Saviour in an especial Manner recommends to his Ministers.

Who the real Author of these Papers may be, I am not yet able for a Certainty to find out. — But I had Reason to believe, that my the Cities of *London* and *Westminster*, and given into the Hands of many private Persons, with strict Injunctions to lend them to no one, nor let them go out of their Hands to any; and whereas, after having accidentally had the hasty Perusal of them, I find many Queries of great Importance concerning me, and my Conduct, contain'd therein; and as it appears that one Paper has little or no Connection with another, and a Copy, when applied for, was refus'd me, and I know not how soon I may embark for *Georgia*; I am therefore obliged hereby to desire a speedy open Publication of the aforesaid Papers, in order that a candid, impartial Answer may be made thereto by me,

*London, Jan. 26, 1743-4. George Whitefield.*



Lord of *London* was concerned in composing or revising them. — That I might not be mistaken, after the Publication of the Advertisement, I wrote his Lordship a Letter \*, wherein I desired to know, whether his Lordship was the Author of this Paper or not, and also desired a Copy. — His Lordship was pleased to send Word by my Friend, who carried the Letter, that “ *I should hear from him.* ” — Hitherto his Lordship has not favoured me with an Answer, — Only some Time ago, one Mr. *Owen*, a Printer, in *Amen-Corner*, *Pater-noster-Row*, who is Printer to

\* *My Lord,*

*Lond. Feb. 1. 1743.*

Simplicity becomes the Followers of *Jesus Christ*, and therefore I think it my Duty to trouble your Lordship with these few Lines. I suppose your Lordship has seen the Advertisement published by me, about four Days ago, concerning some anonymous Papers, which have been handed about the Societies for some considerable Time. As I think it my Duty to answer them, I should be glad to be informed whether the Report be true, that your Lordship composed them, that I may the better know to whom I may direct my Answer. A Sight also of one the Copies, if in your Lordship's keeping, would much oblige,

*My Lord,*

*Your Lordship's,*

*Most obliged, Dutiful Son and Servant,*

*George Whitefield.*

P. S. The Bearer will bring your Lordship's Answer; or if your Lordship please to favour me with a Line, be pleas'd to direct for me, to be left with Mr. *J. Syme*, &c.

my Lord of London, left a Letter \* for me, wherein he informed me, that he had Orders from SEVERAL OF THE BISHOPS to print the Observations on the Conduct and Behaviour of the Methodists (WITH SOME FEW ADDITIONS) for their use; and when the Impression was finished, I should have a Copy. — Why my Lord of London, or the several other Bishops concerned, should conceal their Names, or why a Copy should be denied me, so long after the Papers had been printed, I leave the World to judge. I cannot think such a way of Proceeding can gain your Lordships any Credit from the Publick, or any Thanks from the other Bishops who have not interested themselves in this Affair, and who, I believe, are more noble, than to countenance the Publication of any such Performance.

It is a weighty Thing with me, my Lords, to have Insinuations made, or *Queris* put to me, in respect to my Practice and Doctrine,

\* *SIR,*

*Feb. 3. 1743.*

My Name is Owen, I am a Printer in *Amen-Corner*; and I waited upon you to let you know, that I have had Orders from several of the Bishops, to print for their Use, such Numbers of the Observations upon the Conduct and Behaviour of the Methodists, (with some few Additions) as they have respectively bespoken. And I will not fail to wait upon you with one Copy, as soon as the Impression is finished.

*I am, Sir,*

*Your most obedient, &c.*

in

in such a Public Manner, by Persons that are placed at the Head of the Church. — It is true, your Lordships have not put Queries to me in *your own Names*; but as the Author has concealed his, and these Papers are printed by your Lordships Orders, you have thereby *adopted* them for your own; consequently, I am put under a Necessity of directing this Letter as I have done. And I can assure your Lordships, that with great Deference to the Dignity of your Office, after earnest Prayer, with I trust some Degree of Humility, and unfeigned Simplicity of Heart, I now sit down to perform my Promise, viz. to give a Candid and Impartial Answer to the fore-mentioned Papers, which were sent me last Week, (collected into a Pamphlet) by Mr. Owen; I suppose, according to your Lordships Order.

I never yet was, and hope never shall be so far left to lean to my own Understanding, as to fancy myself *infallible*. — Young as I am, I know too much of the Devices of *Satan*, and the desperate Wickedness and Deceitfulness of my own Heart, not to be sensible, that I am a Man of like Passions with others, and consequently may have sometimes mistaken Nature for Grace, Imagination for Revelation, and the Fire of my own Temper, for the pure and sacred Flame of holy Zeal, which cometh from God's Altar. — If therefore, upon perusing the Pamphlet, I find that I have  
 been



been blameable in any Respect (as in all Probability I may) I will not only confess it, but return hearty Thanks both to the Compiler and your Lordships, *tho' unknown*.

Indeed it is but of little Consequence to the Merits of the Cause to know who the Author is — Only thus much may be said, your Lordships yourselves being Judges, it is not quite fair to *give Stabs in the Dark*; and it is some Satisfaction to the Person attacked, to know who, and what, his Antagonists are, that he may know the better how to deal with them. — But since that cannot be granted, it may be more to the Purpose, to consider the Matters contained in the Pamphlet, and to answer for myself, so far as I am concerned.

It is entitled, *Observations upon the Conduct and Behaviour (i. e. upon the Conduct and the Conduct) of a certain Sect, usually distinguished by the Name of Methodists*. — I think the Title ought rather to run thus — *Misrepresentations of the Conduct and PRINCIPLES, of many orthodox, well-meaning Ministers and Members of the Church of England, and Loyal Subjects to his Majesty King George, FALSELY TERM'D A SECT, and usually distinguished, OUT OF CONTEMPT, by the Name of Methodists*. This Title, my Lords, would just answer the Contents. — For the Principles as well as Conduct of the Methodists are struck at, and *greatly misrepresented* in this Pamphlet. — And the Methodists are no *Sect*, no  
*Sepa-*

*Separatists* from the established Church, neither do they call People from her Communion. — Besides the Author ought to have added, *A New Edition, with several Alterations, Additions and Corrections*; for otherwise the World is made to believe, that this is the self-same Composition which was handed about some Months ago, and which I had a hasty Reading of. — Whereas there are several Things omitted, some Things added, and divers Alterations made in this New Edition, so that the Title-Page is not only injudicious, but false and scandalous.

And if the Title-Page is so bad, I fear the *Design and Scope* of the Pamphlet itself is much worse. — For is it not to represent the Proceedings of the Methodists as dangerous to the Church and State, in order to procure an Act of Parliament against them, or oblige them to secure themselves by turning Dissenters?

But is not such a Motion, at such a Season as this, both uncharitable and unseasonable? — Is not the Administration engaged enough already in other Affairs, without troubling themselves with the Methodists? Or who would now advise them to bring farther Guilt upon the Nation, by persecuting some of the present Government's *most hearty Friends*? — I say, my Lords, *the present Government's most hearty Friends*. — For tho' the Methodists (as the World calls them) disagree in some

some Particulars, yet I dare venture to affirm, that to a *Man* they all agree in this, viz. to love and honour the King. — For my own Part, I profess myself a zealous Friend to his present Majesty King George, and the present Administration. — Wherever I go, I think it my Duty to pray for and preach up Obedience to him, and all that are set in Authority under him, in the most explicate manner. — And I believe should it ever come to the Trial, the poor despised Methodists who love his Majesty out of *Principle*, would cleave close to him in the most imminent Danger, when others that adhere to him, only for his *Preferments*, perhaps might not appear altogether so hearty. — My Lords, I have now been a Preacher above seven Years, and for these six Years last past, have been called to act in a very publick Way. — Your Lordships must have heard of the very great Numbers that have attended. Sometimes several of the Nobility, and now and then even some of the Clergy have been present. — Did they ever hear me speak a disloyal Word? Are there not Thousands can testify how fervently and frequently I pray for his Majesty King George, his Royal Offspring, and the present Government? Yes, my Lords, they can. — And I trust through the Divine Assistance, I should be enabled to do so, tho' surrounded with *Popish* Enemies, and in Danger of dying for it as soon as my Prayer was ended. — This, my Lords, as far



far as I am acquainted with them, is the present Temper of me and my Friends. — And may I not then appeal to your Lordships, whether it be not the Interest of the Administration to encourage such Persons, or at least to let them alone? *Gallio* on a like Occasion thought it his Wisdom to act thus. — “ For  
 “ when the Jews made Insurrection with one  
 “ Accord against Paul, and brought him to the  
 “ Judgment-Seat, saying, this Fellow persuad-  
 “ eth Men to worship God contrary to the Law,  
 “ he said unto the Jews, if it were a matter  
 “ of wrong or wicked Lewdness, O ye Jews,  
 “ reason would that I should bear with you. —  
 “ But if it be a question of Words and Names,  
 “ and of your Law, look ye to it, for I will  
 “ be no Judge of such Matters.” — Nay, he was so far from approving of their Motion, that he drove them from the Judgment-Seat.

My Lords, I know of no Law of the State that we have broken, and therefore we have not incurred the Displeasure of the Civil Power. — If your Lordships apprehend that we are liable to Ecclesiastical Censures, we are ready to make a proper Defence whenever called to it by our Ecclesiastical Superiors. — As for myself, your Lordships very well know that I am a Bachelor of Arts, have taken the Oaths, subscribed to the Articles, and have been twice regularly ordained. — In this Character I have acted both at Home and Abroad, and know of no Law of our Government which prohibits my

preaching in any Field, Barn, Street or Out-house whatsoever.

It is true one or two of my Friends, who preach as I do, were bred Dissenters, *had* been *licensed*, and preached in *licensed Places* before my Acquaintance with them, and one or two of the Houses where the Methodists meet, have, without my Knowledge, been licensed since; and therefore the Author of the Pamphlet is quite mistaken in his *first Paragraph* (as well as the Title-page and Design of his Pamphlet) wherein he declares, that “it does  
 “not appear that any of the Preachers among  
 “the Methodists have qualified themselves  
 “and the Places (it would have been better  
 “*English* if he had said, Qualified themselves  
 “and *Licensed* the Places) of their assembling,  
 “according to the Act of Toleration;  
 “which Act warrants separate Assemblies for  
 “the Worship of God, that before were unlawful.”—I wish the Author had taken a little more Care to inform himself before he published the Pamphlet.—He would not then have been guilty of so *many egregious Mistakes*; or without Cause have *condemn'd the Innocent*, as he hath done.—However, in the general, he is right,—for, *as yet*, we see no sufficient Reason to leave the Church of *England*, and turn Dissenters;—neither will we do it till we are *thrust out*. When a Ship is *leaky*, prudent Sailors, that value the Cargo, will not leave it to sink, but rather continue in it so long

long as they *can*, to help pump out the Water.—I leave the Author, my Lords, to make the Application.

But whether the Methodists are Churchmen or Dissenters, the Acts of King Charles II. referred to, *Pag. 3. Parag. 1. and Pag. 4. Parag. 2.* make nothing against them, neither do they prove the Methodists to be Violaters of the Statute Law by their being *Field-Preachers*. And what the Author so peremptorily affirms, *Pag. 4. Parag. 3.* (and which, by the way, is one of *the few Additions* made in this which was not in the last Edition) is directly false—For he says, that “ it has not  
“ been known, that a dissenting Teacher of  
“ any Denomination whatever, has thought  
“ himself warranted, under the Act of Tolera-  
“ tion, to preach in Fields or Streets.”—It may not, indeed, be known to the Author; but I know, my Lords, two of the most eminent among the dissenting Ministers, who have thought themselves warranted, if not by the Act of Toleration, yet by the Laws of the Land, to preach out of Doors; and accordingly, when the House would not contain the People, have preached in a Field or Orchard, and near the common High-way.—My Lords, I have been perusing all the Acts of King Charles II. wherein the Word *Field* is mentioned, and find they are intended “ to suppress *seditious Conventicles*,  
“ for prohibiting further, and more proper,  
“ speedy Remedies against the growing and  
“ dangerous Practices of *seditious Sectaries*,



“ and other *disloyal Persons*, who, under Pre-  
 tence of *tender Consciences*, have, or may,  
 “ at their Meetings contrive *Insurrections* (as  
 “ *late Experience* hath shewn). These, my  
 Lords, are the *Preambles* of the Acts.—These  
 are the only *Field-Meetings* I can find that  
 are prohibited.—And how, my Lords, can  
 such Acts be applied to the Methodists? Does  
 not such an Application imply a Charge against  
 the Methodists, as tho’ they were *seditious Sec-  
 taries, disloyal Persons, who, under Pretence of  
 tender Consciences, have, or may contrive  
 Insurrections?* Has any *late Experience*,  
*shewn this?* No, my Lords, and I hope  
 no *future Experience* ever will.—How then  
 can your Lordships, with a safe Conscience,  
 encourage such a Pamphlet, or bespeak any  
 Number of Mr. Owen, in order, as may be  
 supposed, that they may be dispersed among  
 your Lordship’s Clergy? Well might the Au-  
 thor conceal his Name. A more notorious  
 Libel has not been publish’d. I am apt to be-  
 lieve that Mr. Owen the Printer is of my Mind  
 also; for he has taken care in the Title-page,  
 not to let the World know *where, or by whom*,  
 this Pamphlet was printed.—It comes into pub-  
 lick like a Child dropt, that no body cares to  
 own. And, indeed, who can be blamed for  
 disowning such a Libel?—For how, my Lords,  
 does it appear by these Acts, what the Author  
 so confidently asserts, *Pag. 4. Parag. 2.* “ that  
 “ this new Sect of Methodists have broken-  
 thro’

“ thro’ all these Provisions and Restraints, nei-  
 “ ther regarding the Penalties of the Laws,  
 “ which stand in full Force against them, nor  
 “ embracing the Protection which the Act of  
 “ Toleration might give them, in case they  
 “ complied with the Conditions of it” -- How  
 can he immediately add, “ and if this be not  
 “ an open *Defiance to Government*, it is hard  
 “ to say what is?” -- May I not more justly  
 say, if this be not an *open Defamation*, and  
*open Defiance of all Rules of Charity*, it is  
 hard to say what is? Might he not as well tax  
 the Methodists with High Treason? -- Father,  
 forgive him! -- Lord Jesus lay not this Sin to his  
 Charge!

Tho’ the Reign, my Lords, of K. *Charles II.*  
 wherein the Acts before referred to were made,  
 was not the most mild and moderate in religi-  
 ous Matters, yet your Lordships very well  
 know the famous Trial of *Mede and Pen*; how  
 after the Jury had been confined so long, they  
 brought them in guilty only of *speaking in*  
*Grace-Church-street*. -- And if *Quakers* met  
 with so much Lenity under the Reign of King  
*Charles*, what Liberty of preaching in Fields  
 and elsewhere may not the loyal Ministers and  
 Members of the Church of England, nay, Pro-  
 testant Dissenting Teachers also, expect under  
 the more gentle and moderate Reign of his present  
 Majesty King *George*, who, as I have been in-  
 formed, has declared “ *there shall be no Perse-*  
 “ *cution in his Days*.” -- May the Crown long  
 flourish

flourish on his Royal Head, and a *Popish Pretender* never be permitted to sit upon the *English Throne*! To this I believe all the *Methodists* will heartily say, *Amen*, and *Amen*.

That the *Methodists*, in general, are Members of the *establish'd Church*, the Author of the Pamphlet himself confesses.—For, *Pag. 4. Parag. 4.* after he has, *without Proof*, charged them with making open *Inroads upon the National Constitution*; he adds, that “*these Teachers and their Followers affect to be thought Members of the National Church.*”—And his following Words prove that they not only *affect* it, but are Members of the *established Church in reality*.—For, says he, “and do accordingly join in Communion with it.”—And it appears, *Parag. 6.* that some of the *Methodists* *communicate every Lord's-Day*.—What better Proof can they give of their being Members of the *Church of England*? It would be well if all her Members gave a like Proof.—But *then*, says our Author, *Pag. 4. Parag. 4.* they do it in a Manner that is “very irregular, and contrary to the Directions laid down in the Rubrick before the Communion, which is established by the Act of Uniformity.”—(Here is another Correction in this new Edition. In the Copy that I read, it was *contrary to the Directions laid down in our great Rule, the Act of Uniformity*. I am glad the Author found out his Mistake, in putting *the Act of Uniformity for the Rubrick*.—I hope the next Edition will



will come out more correct still.)—This Rubrick, says he, directs as follows. *Pag. 4. Parag. 4.* “*So many as intend to be Partakers of the holy Communion, shall signify their Names to the Curate, at least, some time the Day before.*”—And, for not doing this, the “*new Sect of Methodists, Parag. 5. Pag. 6.* is charg’d not only *with breaking through, but notoriously despising these wholesome Rules.*”—But how unjust is such a Charge? When I read it, it put me in mind of what the poor persecuted Officers of the Children of Israel said to Pharaoh, *Exod. v. 15, 16. Wherefore dealest thou thus with thy Servants? There is no Straw given unto thy Servants. They say unto us, Make Brick, and behold thy Servants are beaten, but the Fault is in thy own People.*—For, my Lords, is it not the Business of the Clergy to see this Rubrick put in Execution? And the Duty of the Church-Wardens, according to the 28th Canon, quoted by our Author, *Pag. 5. Parag. 4.* “*to mark whether any Strangers come often, and commonly from other Parishes to their Churches, and to shew the Ministers of them.*”—But, my Lords, where is this Rubrick or Canon observed or insisted on by the Ministers or Church-Wardens thro’ England, Ireland, Wales, or his Majesty’s Town of Berwick upon Tweed, except now and then when they entertain a Grudge against some particular Methodists? These, my Lords, would rejoice  
to

to see, that *Ministers* and *Church-wardens* would do their Duty in this Particular. For many of them have been so offended by the Clergy's promiscuously and carelessly admitting all Sorts of People to the Communion, that if it had not been for me, they would have left the Church only upon this Account. We would therefore humbly recommend it to your Lordships, that you, and the rest of the Right Reverend the Bishops, would insist upon Curates and Church-wardens putting this, and all other such wholesome Laws and Rubricks, in Execution. That which is holy would not then be given unto Dogs, nor so many open and notorious Evil-Livers take the sacred Symbols of our Lord's most blessed Body and Blood into their unhallowed Hands and Mouths. The Methodists with your Lordships Prosperity in this much-wish'd-for, tho' long neglected Part of Reformation in the Name of the Lord.

At the same time, my Lords, I would not say any thing that might any way encourage Disorders; neither would I persuade the Methodists to leave their own Parish Churches when the Sacrament is administered there. On the contrary, I would have them take the Author's Advice, *Pag. 6. Parag. 6.* "If particular Persons are disposed to receive Weekly, when the Sacrament is not administered at their own Parish-Church, to repair privately to the Church nearest their own, where the

" the Sacrament is administer'd every Lord's-  
 " day, having first signified their Names to  
 " the Minister, as the Rubrick directs." ~~-----~~  
 This, I believe, they will readily comply  
 with. For I cannot think with this Author (in  
 the same Paragraph,) that the Reason of their  
 coming in such Numbers is, that they may  
 have the *vain Pleasure of appearing together in*  
*a Body, and as a distinct Sect.*—We would  
 rather, according to the Rules of that Charity  
 which hopeth all things *for the best*, believe  
 that they come together in such Companies to  
 animate and encourage one another.—Dr. Hor-  
 neck, I remember, in his Account of the pri-  
 mitive Christians, remarks, that " where you  
 " saw one Christian, you might generally see  
 " more." And is it not delightful, my Lords,  
 to behold a Communion Table crowded? Do  
 not such as complain of it discover something  
 of the Spirit of those *Pharisees*, who were an-  
 gry when so many People brought their Sick  
 to be healed by our Lord Jesus on the Sabbath-  
 day? For I cannot think the Ministers com-  
 plain of this only on account of their being  
 hereby "*put under the Difficulty* (Parag. 5.  
 " Pag. 6.) either of rejecting *great Numbers*  
 " as unknown to them, or administering the  
 " Sacrament to *great Numbers*, of whom  
 " they have no Knowledge," because it is too  
 too notorious that Hundreds receive the blef-  
 sed Sacrament, both in *London* and other Places,  
 where there are no Methodists, whom the  
~~show how~~ ~~two~~ ~~that~~ ~~D~~ ~~Person~~ ~~donald~~ ~~of~~ ~~Mi-~~



Minister knows little or nothing at all about, takes no pains to enquire after. Oh that the Author's mentioning this may be a means of stirring up the Clergy to approve themselves *good Shepherds* by seeking, as much as in them lies, to know the State of all that come to the holy Communion! Glad am I, my Lords, to find that the Author, in this Edition, hath left out the Complaint which was in the Copy I read, of such Crowds coming to receive the Sacrament, "because the Ministers who are *Afternoon Lecturers*, were thereby put under the "Hardship of not having Time for necessary "Rest and Refreshment *between Morning and "Evening Duties*.--For might not our Lord say unto them, You slothful Servants, cannot you labour for me one Day in a Week? Cannot you lose one Meal to feed my Lambs, without complaining of it as an *Hardship*?--Surely none can make such a Complaint but such *whose God is their Belly, whose Glory is their Shame, who mind earthly Things*.--But I need not mention this, because the Author himself seems ashamed of it.

And indeed this, as well as the other Objections against the Methodists, are so *trivial*, and the Acts referred to as discountenancing their Field-preaching so *impertinent*, that the Author, without the least Degree of a *prophetic Spirit*, might easily foresee, Parag. 8. Pag. 8. "that this, and every other *SUCH* Complaint "against the Methodists, would be censured  
" not

“ not only by *them*, (but by *every impartial Person*) as a Discouragement to Piety and Devotion, and particularly a religious Observation of the Lord’s-day.” -- Nay, my Lords, he might have foreseen that it would be censured as a *wicked, false and ill-designing Libel*. -- For is it not wicked to represent innocent and loyal Persons as *open Defiers of Government*, Pag. 4. Parag. 2. and making *open Inroads upon the National Constitution* (Parag. 4.) without bringing any real Proofs of either?

I am not, my Lords, of the Author’s Opinion, Parag. 8. Pag. 8. “ that this Slander (of his being a *Libeller*) is *effectually confuted* by looking back to the State of the several religious Societies in *London and Westminster* for many Years past.” -- This will only serve to *increase* every unprejudiced Person’s Censure of this Performance, and more effectually, without the least Degree of Slander, prove it a *notorious Libel*. -- For wherein do the *Methodists Societies* transgress the Laws of Church or State any more than the Societies in *London and Westminster*? -- “ Do the particular Members of each Society (Parag. 8. Pag. 8.) attend the publick Duties of the Day together with their Neighbours, as the Laws of Church and State direct?” Do not the Members of the *Methodists Societies* the same? “ Have the Members of the religious Societies in *London and Westminster* (as the Author mentions in the same Paragraph)

“ also (by private Agreements among them-  
 “ selves) their Evening Meetings, to employ  
 “ the Remainder of the Day in serious Con-  
 “ versation, and in reading good Books, &c.”

Have not the Members of the Methodists So-  
 cieties Liberty to enter into a like private A-  
 greement among themselves? Have the

“ Members of the London Societies behaved  
 “ with Modesty and Decency, without any Vio-  
 “ lation of publick Order and Regularity?”

So have ours, my Lords, as all must confess  
 who have been present when our Societies met.

And therefore, my Lords, if these London  
 Societies, as our Author says, *Parag. 8. Pag. 8.* *wh*  
*have received no Discouragements*, but, on the  
 contrary, have been countenanced and encoura-  
 ged by the Bishops and Clergy, why do not  
 the Methodists meet with the same Treatment?  
 Are they not as loyal Subjects? If the one  
 read a Prayer, may not the other pray extem-  
 pore? Does any Law of God or Man forbid  
 it? If the one meet in a Vestry, or private  
 House, may not the other meet in a Foundery  
 or Tabernacle? Are not your Lordships  
 therefore reduced to this Dilemma, either to  
 encourage both or neither? or at least give  
 the World better Reasons than the Author of  
 this Pamphlet has, why your Lordships  
 should countenance and encourage the one,  
 and so strenuously discountenance and discourage  
 the other.

For my own part, my Lords, I know of no  
 Reason why they are discountenanced, ex-  
 cept



cept this, viz. "The Methodists Socie-  
 " ties (as they are called) are more for the  
 " Power of Godliness than those other Socie-  
 " ties of London and Westminster."—I assure  
 your Lordships, I have not been altogether a  
*Stranger* to these Societies. — I used to meet  
 with some of them frequently, and have more  
 than once preached their Quarterly Sermon at  
*Bow-Church*. — Some who before had only the  
*Form of Godliness*, our Saviour was since pleased  
 to call *effectually* by his Grace. — But when  
 they began to talk *feelingly* and *experimentally* of  
 the New-Birth, free Justification and the In-  
 dwelling of the Spirit of God in Believers  
 Hearts, they were soon looked upon as *Righteous*  
*over-much*, and accordingly were cast out by  
 their *self-righteous* Brethren. — These were the  
*late Extravagancies*, my Lords, into which the  
 Author (just at the Conclusion of his first Part)  
 says, that some have *been unhappily misled*; and  
 this, my Lords, was the *first Rise* of the So-  
 cieties which the Methodists now frequent. —  
 Oh, that He and all that oppose them had been  
 misled into the like Extravagancies! I mean a  
 real Experience of the New-Birth, and the  
 Righteousness of *Jesus Christ* imputed and ap-  
 plied to their Souls by Faith thro' the Operation  
 of the Eternal Spirit! For without this they can-  
 not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. — These  
 things, my Lords, the *first Members* of the Religi-  
 ous Societies in *London* and *Westminster* were no  
*Strangers* to. — Nay, their being *misled* into  
 what

what the Author calls the Methodists *late Extravagancies*, was the Rise of *their Societies*, as well as *ours*; and they met for the *very same Ends*, and I believe in the *very same Spirit* as the Methodists now do. --- For a Proof of this, I would refer the Author to Dr. *Woodward's Account of the Rise and Progress of the religious Societies in the City of London, &c.* --- My Lords, I have been reading over his second Chapter, and in reading it could scarce refrain weeping, when I consider'd how *blind* the Author of this Pamphlet must be, not to discern that the first religious Societies answered as to their *Spirit, Experience, and Ends of meeting* to the Methodist's Societies, as Face answers to Face in the Water. --- Let him not therefore mention the *Predecessors* of the present *London Societies* (the last Words of the first Part) as tho' that would *strengthen* his Cause. --- Indeed, my Lords, it *weakens* it much. --- For was it possible for these Predecessors to rise from the dead, and examine our Principles and Practices, and those of the present religious Societies of *London and Westminster*, I believe they would *utterly disown* them, and turn Methodists too.

And why, my Lords, should the Author be so averse to *Field-preaching*? Has not our Saviour given a *Sanction* to this Way of preaching? Was not the best Sermon that was ever preach'd delivered on a *Mount*? Did not our Glorious *Emanuel* (after he was thrust out of the Synagogues) preach from a Ship, in a Wilderness,  
 &c?

Qc? Did not the Apostles after his Ascension,  
 preach in *Schools, Publick Markets,* and such  
 like Places of Resort and Concourse? And  
 can we copy after better Examples? If it be  
 said " that the World was then *Heathen,*" I  
 answer, and am persuaded your Lordships will  
 agree with me in this, that there are Thou-  
 sands and Ten Thousands in his Majesty's Do-  
 minions, as ignorant of true and undefiled Re-  
 ligion, as ever the *Heathens* were? And are  
 not Persons who dare venture out, and show  
 such poor Souls the way to Heaven, *real*  
*Friends* both to Church and State? And why  
 then, my Lords, should the *Civil Power* be ap-  
 plied to in order to quell and suppress them? Or  
 a Pamphlet encouraged by *several of the Right*  
*Reverend the Bishops,* which is manifestly  
 calculated for that Purpose? I would humbly  
 ask your Lordships, whether it would not be  
 more becoming your Lordships Characters, to  
 put your Clergy on preaching against *Revel-*  
*ling, Cock-fighting,* and such like, than to move  
 the Government against those, who out of  
 Love to God and precious Souls put *their Lives*  
*in their Hand* and preach unto such Revellers,  
 Repentance towards God, and Faith towards  
 our Lord *Jesus*? What if the Methodists, by *Pub-*  
*lick Advertisements* do invite the *Rabble*? (as our  
 Author is pleased to write Pag. 4. Paragraph 2.)  
 Is not the same done by other Clergy, and even  
 by your Lordships, when you preach *Chari-*  
*ty-Sermons*? But, my Lords, what does the  
 Author



Author mean by the *Rabble*? I suppose the *common People*.--- If so, these are they who always heard the Blessed *Jesus* gladly.--- It was chiefly the Poor, my Lords, the *οχλος*, the *Turba*, the Mob, the Multitude, these People who the Scribes and Pharisees, said *knew not the Law*, and were *accursed*; these were they that were evangelized, had the Gospel preached unto them, and received the Spirit of God's dear Son.--- Not many Mighty, not many Noble are called, says the Apostle. *Indocti rapiunt cælum, dum nos cum doctrina descendimus in Gebennam*, says one of the Fathers.--- And therefore, my Lords, supposing we do advertise the *Rabble*, and none but such make up our Auditories (which is quite false) if this be the Methodist's *Shame*, they may *glory* in it.--- For these *Rabble*, my Lords, have precious and immortal Souls, for which the dear Redeemer shed his precious Blood, as well as the Great and Rich.--- These, my Lords, are the *Publicans and Harlots* that enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, whilst *Self-righteous formal Professors* reject it. To shew such poor Sinners the way to God, to preach to them the Power of Christ's Resurrection, and to pluck them as Firebrands out of the Burning, the Methodist Preachers go out into the Highways and Hedges.--- If this is to be *vile*, by the Help of my God, I shall be *more vile*; neither count I my Life dear unto myself, so  
that

that I may finish my Course with Joy; and be made instrumental in turning any of this *Rabble* to Righteousness. -- And more especially do I think it my Duty to invite and preach to this *Rabble* in all Places, where Providence shall send me; *at this Season*, that I may warn them against the dreadful Effects of *Popish Principles*, and exhort them to exert their utmost Endeavours to keep out a *Popish Pretender* from ever sitting upon the *English Throne*. -- In acting thus, I humbly apprehend, I can do most service to the Cause of the Blessed *Jesus*, his present Majesty King *George*, my Fellow-Subjects, and the Government under which I live. -- And, however, such kind of Preachers may be every where spoken against now, yet I doubt not but at the great decisive Day they will be received with a *Euge Bone*, and shine as Stars in the Firmament for ever and ever; whilst those who have only *divined for Hire*, have fed themselves and not the Flock, and lorded it over God's Heritage, perhaps, may pay dear for their Preferment, and rise to everlasting Contempt. -- Pardon me, my Lords, for expressing myself here with some Degree of *Warmth*. --- I must own it gives me Concern, to see some of the Clergy strain at a *Gnat* and swallow a *Camel*, and attempt to pull the *Mote* out of our Eyes, before they have pulled the *Beam* out of their own. --- Is it not ridiculous, my Lords, even in the Eyes of worldly Men, and does it not

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render the Author of this Pamphlet, justly liable to Contempt, to charge the *Methodists* with breaking *Canons* and *Articles*, which is really not *their* Fault, when at the same time he knows that the *Generality* of the Clergy so notoriously break both *Canons* and *Articles*, and that too in the most important Articles, such as not *CATECHISING*, *PLURALITIES*, *NON-RESIDENCE*, &c. every Day themselves?— With what Face can he do it? Is not this like *Nero's* setting *Rome* on Fire, and then charging it upon the *Christians*? May not *Physician* heal *thyself*, be immediately resorted on him?

But I have done.---I would not bring a railing Accusation against any.--- Neither would I, my Lords, when giving a Reason of the Hope that is in me, do it any otherways than with *Meekness* and *Fear*.--- I would therefore now proceed to answer the other Parts of the Pamphlet; but I shall reserve that for another Letter, which, God willing, shall be published in a short Time. --- In the mean while, I humbly recommend this to the Divine Blessing and your Lordships Considerations, and beg leave to subscribe myself, my Lords,

Your Lordships most

obedient Son and Servant,

London, March 10,

1743-4.

GEORGE WHITEFIELD.